



News

[Breaking News](#)

[Feature Focus](#)

[Celebrate](#)

Conference News

[Local Church News](#)

[Lifting Up...](#)

[NEWS Archives](#)

[Resources](#)

YOU ARE HERE: [HOME](#) ▶ [CONFERENCE NEWS](#)

Conference News - November 2012



Conference Minister Search Committee Begins Its Work

The Search Committee for a new conference minister, chaired by Jen Austin of Holy Trinity Community UCC, Nashville, has begun its work by preparing a conference profile. Members of the search committee reflect the conference in its full diversity and have been elected from churches in all of our associations. The committee includes the following members in addition to the chair: Rodney Franklin, pastor of First Congregational Christian Church, UCC, Birmingham; Lyle Weible, Pleasant Hill Community UCC, TN; Regina Drake, Victory for the World, UCC, Stone Mountain, GA; John Gill, pastor, Church of the Savior, UCC, Knoxville, TN; Joanne Calhoun, Circular Congregational UCC, Charleston, SC; Marvin Morgan, associate minister, First Congregational UCC, Atlanta; Leah Lyman-Waldron, co-pastor, Praxis UCC, Atlanta. Keep alert to continuing news as they meet.

SECUCC eNewsletter

[Sign up for SECUCC](#)

[Email Newsletter](#)

[GO](#)

Georgia-South Carolina Fall Meeting, October 20, Hosted by Bethany Congregational UCC, Tells Our Stories and Celebrates



The Georgia-South Carolina Association gathered on Saturday, October 20, in Thomasville, GA, for an ecclesiastical council to share stories, food, and fellowship. At our opening worship we were led by the Evergreen Congregational UCC Men's Chorus, who engaged us with the richness of call-and-response singing.

Brynn White, a member in discernment from Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson, SC, preached her ecclesiastical council sermon, recalling to us that we were worshipping on sacred ground at Bethany Congregational UCC, one of our AMA churches; sacred for the ministries which the AMA supported by bringing the promise of education to the African-American citizens of the area through Allen Normal School, once affiliated with Bethany Church. In ways Brynn, a member of one of our newest churches, represents a bridge from this historic past to a promising future, as our new churches take up the challenge of living out the call to justice.

Southeast Conference FAQ's

[Who is the SEC?](#)

[Who is the UCC?](#)

[How Do I Find a UCC Church?](#)

[What Ministries are Available?](#)

[Is Training Available?](#)

in new ways today. She called on us to hold our vision before us, to let our light shine and not be dimmed.

Following a unanimous vote to approve Brynn for ordination, the association then recognized Artis Johnson, pastor of Evergreen Congregational UCC, Beachton, GA, for his 40 years of ministry in that church. At the time Artis began his ministry, Evergreen UCC was yoked with Bethany UCC, and while they are no longer yoked, they continue to worship together on the final Sunday of five-Sunday months. Artis has served in a number of significant leadership positions in the Conference and the Association, including a term as moderator of the Association.



The Association welcomed its new elected moderator, George Drumbor, of Circular Congregational UCC, Charleston. George succeeds Elizabeth Clement, who has resigned to accept a position in the national setting of the UCC.

Susan Mitchell of the national UCC staff led us in a time of reflection about each of our own stories, and began by bringing greetings from her colleagues in Cleveland. In her reflections she asked herself and each of us whether we would have had the courage of those who shaped the stories of the Amistad and the AMA as it extended its missions across the South. She invited us to share our testimonies. George Drumbor offered a story from Circular Congregational Church of Josiah Smith, a slaver who became an abolitionist following his encounter of faith at Circular. Artis Johnson shared a word about the faithfulness of Jesus and invited us to remember that "Jesus is on the main line, tell him what you want." David Templeton, a chaplain from Savannah, spoke of being a recovering racist. John Hoover of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, offered reflections about having been raised in a historic peace church, the Church of the Brethren, and stories of his ancestors and their faithfulness. The event ended with a fish fry, hosted by the men of Evergreen Congregational UCC.



Introducing Board Member at Large, Rev. Lawrence (Larry) E. Calbert, Sr. Larry graduated from Kentucky State University in Frankfort, KY, with a Bachelor's of Science in Business and a minor in Computer Science. He has taken classes at the Interdenominational Theological Center, Columbia Theological Seminary, and has been engaged in ongoing education and training for ministry. Raised in the Congregational church, he was called to preach in 1977. Larry served in both Baptist and UCC settings, until he was called to serve as pastor of Rush Memorial Congregational UCC in Atlanta in 1989. He has received several honors and awards through the years. He has served as moderator of the Georgia-South Carolina Association, in various positions on the Association's Church and Ministry Committee, and as Disaster Relief

Coordinator for Georgia and South Carolina.

Rev. Calbert and his wife, Beverly, are parents of five adult children, with a son preceding his parents in death, a son-in-law, two daughters-in-law, and thirteen grandchildren and two great-grands.

At a congregational meeting on October 21, **Covenant Community Church** in Center Point, AL, an eastern suburb of Birmingham, voted by a 93 percent margin to affiliate with the United Church of Christ. The church, a nondenominational congregation, has a long history of advocacy for justice and inclusivity in the Birmingham area. Led by the Rev. J. R. Finney, the congregation numbers 300 members and several years ago moved to its current campus in Center Point from inner-city Birmingham. Over the course of the next several months the congregation will continue to explore the United Church of Christ, and will attend meetings of the Conference and the Association, as well as host classes to introduce its leadership to the United Church of Christ and its ministries around the globe. Rev. Finney is in the process of seeking privilege of call in the UCC, and is currently enrolled in the UCC History and Polity class facilitated by Tim Downs.

On December 2, **United Church of Christ of Pensacola, FL**, will hold its first worship service. This will be the second congregation that is a part of a Gulf Coast strategy for the Southeast Conference, Open Table Community of Faith UCC, in Mobile, AL, being the first. The Panhandle of Florida, long dormant in new church development activity, is one of the most promising areas for extending the UCC in our conference. The church's pastor, Patrick Rogers, has been called by the Conference Board of Directors to this ministry. In this conference, new church developers are called by the Conference and their work is considered to be a ministry of the Conference until the church applies to its association to be accepted as a congregation in full standing.

Latest News	Most Read Articles
Pathways Transitions Conference News - November 2012 Local Church News - November 2012 Lifting Up... November 2012 Celebrations - October 2012	Southeast Conference UCC (SEC) UCC History and Polity Southeast Conference Campaign Steps to Planting a New Church Global Theological Education

SECUCC CONTACTS

- Conference Minister
- TAP Director
- SEC Donations
- Church Development
- Communications Director

SECUCC RESOURCES

- Annual Meeting
- Global Theological Education
- Local Church News
- SEC Churches
- Seminars/Webinars

FAVORITE LINKS

- Bridge 4 Faith
- The Center for Progressive Renewal
- United Church of Christ
- Mission Insite
- Resource Center

EVENTS CALENDAR

November 2012						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

[Steps to Planting a New Church](#) [News](#) [Contact Us](#) [Donate](#)

Southeast Conference United Church of Christ - 1330 West Peachtree Street, Suite 350 - Atlanta, GA 30309 || Office: 800.807.1993, Fax: 404.607.7939
 Copyright © 2012 SECUCC Web Site. Designed by [WeDesignWebs.com](#)

